

6. *The Chairman.*] I think you said that you had no special knowledge of the internal working of Addington ?—That is so.

7. The question has arisen as to what is considered in this country a fair percentage to add to the cost of labour and material for general engineering work, to cover fixed charges such as foremen's wages, cost of fuel, upkeep of plant and machinery and buildings, interest, and depreciation. Do you feel inclined to give the Commission any idea of what you consider a fair charge ?—That is a very difficult question. It depends on what you do put down as working-charges. If you propose to carry the whole thing, supervision, depreciation, interest, rent, and everything of that kind, I will tell you this much : that, frankly, the Home people showed me their books without hesitation, and in most cases it was close on 100 per cent. That was arrived at from the actual working every year. Year by year they took out the actual cost.

8. That is exclusive of profit ?—That is exclusive of profit altogether. I do not say that is for New Zealand. I am not going to commit myself there.

9. You evidently would consider 15 per cent. a small charge ?—It is absurd. It would not look at it. That is my own experience.

10. *Mr. Niven.*] Could you give us any idea of what you consider a fair day's work for the hydraulic riveter under fair conditions on shell-work ?—That has got to be very tightly riveted, and some may have to be cut out. Of course, in girder-work we get a good number in. I would not like to say what would be a fair number. It depends very much on the condition of the machine and the experience and knowledge of the men, and then you may have to cut out so many rivets. It also depends on the character of the building.

11. *Mr. Roberts.*] Can you give any idea of the average number of rivets that should be put in on a boiler ?—I would not like to say. If you are on a shell you may, with a good run up and down, do a fair amount, but when you come to fire-boxes and other parts it is a very difficult thing to make an estimate. I should not like to commit myself. I know from memory to a certain extent, but I would not like to trust to memory.

12. *Mr. Hampton.*] Under certain conditions, and on certain classes of work, five minutes per rivet would not be too long ?—I would not like to say that. I think I should take exception to the five minutes.

MYRON ALVA WELSH examined. (No. 12.)

1. *Mr. Beattie.*] What are you ?—I am a blacksmith employed at Addington Workshops.

2. You have volunteered to give certain evidence based on your experience at Addington and in other countries. How long have you been at Addington ?—About twenty months.

3. In what other countries have you worked ?—I have worked in America, in the Philippine Islands, I have had a look through England, and through Germany as a blacksmith.

4. *The Chairman.*] Working your way, or as a visitor ?—Through England and Germany I was sent by the Pittsburg Locomotive Works to gain knowledge for the benefit of the shop. I have seen shops where the division of labour was much keener than at the Addington Workshops ; but, taking Addington Workshops as they are, with their conveniences, they do as well as any place I have been in.

5. *Mr. Beattie.*] It has been suggested that in the Addington blacksmiths' shop the work was very much of a "Government stroke" nature. Can you tell us anything as to that ?—Well, I cannot find much opportunity for what you term "Government stroke." I have been in shops where there has been more fuss made, but they were only making a fuss and were not doing the work.

6. Are you prepared to express an opinion as to the suggestion that the smiths' shop is working at a less rate as regards energy than it should ? Are the men loafing to any extent ?—Not more than you will find in any other place. I can honestly say that they work better out there than in many places I have been in. They do not need to be driven. It seems to me that they have better discipline. The man who has control seems to have more power over his men. There is remarkable harmony and peace, and the men do not need any driving. Whilst I have been in many shops, in the smiths' shop at Addington there is more harmony among the men than in any shop I was ever in.

7. You think that is all conducive to getting the work out ?—I have had a little experience in foremanising smiths' shops, and to my mind harmony is the important thing.

8. We may take it then that, in your opinion, the men in the smiths' shop at Addington are doing a fair day's work for a fair day's wage ?—Yes. Mr. Scott opened the subject up. It is not so much the men as it is the shop, and Addington is not any worse off than any other shop. It may be that it is because I am a smith, but it seems to me that a smiths' shop is the last place in the world to grow. The smiths' shop never keeps pace with the rolling-stock.

9. Is that at Addington or elsewhere ?—Anywhere. Take the locomotives that you have to-day compared with those of ten years ago, how much improvement has there been in the blacksmiths' shop ? Many pieces that we make we have to take outside to turn round. That is not the fault of the men or the foreman.

10. That is a remark that is applicable to smiths' shops generally ?—Yes.

11. The smiths' shop is allowed rather to be forgotten ?—It seems to be on the tail end.

12. *The Chairman.*] Have you considered the energy shown by the men in the Addington smiths' shop as to how it compares with that shown in the American locomotive shops ?—I have to say that they just work as well—that is, not considering piecework shops, of course.

13. What is the ratio in energy exhibited at Addington as compared with American piecework shops ?—They are not in it.

14. How do the ordinary American day-work shops compare with piecework shops ?—They are not in it.